

Drawing Amendments

Applicants submit herewith replacement FIGS. 7, 10 and 12 that correct typographical errors in various reference characters.

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-26 have been considered in the Office Action.

The Drawings have been objected to for incorrectly designating certain reference characters.

Claims 13, 14 and 26 have been objected to for including unclear claim language. In particular, the Office action asserts that the language “an address of the first network on the second network” in claims 13 and 26, and “information regarding the first network” in claim 14 are incorrect.

Claims 1,2, 5, 7, 8, 11-15, 18, 20, 21 and 24-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Spinks et al. U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0029534 (“Spinks”).

Claims 3, 6, 16 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Spinks.

Claims 4 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Spinks and Tamura U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0133678 (“Tamura”).

Claims 9, 10, 22 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Spinks and Hall et al. U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0133555 (“Hall”).

Reply to Drawing Objections

Applicants have amended the specification and drawings to correct various typographical errors. In particular, applicants have amended FIGS. 7, 10 and 12 to correct reference characters associated with directory server 20, second network 22, third network 24. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the drawing objections.

Reply to Claim Objections

The Office action asserts that claims 13 and 26 are unclear because the claims recite “the identifying information comprises an address of the first network on the second network,” but the Examiner was unable to find a description of “the address of the first network” in the specification. Applicants respectfully submit that the specification at least at page 5, lines 27-29, page 9, lines 17-19, page 10, lines 12-15 and

page 12, lines 15-30 adequately describes the cited claim language. In particular, the cited sections describe a first network 14 coupled to a second network 22 via a router 26, which has a public IP address on second network 22. In addition, the cited portions describe a registration/query processor 52 sending an identification message to a directory server, and that the identification message may include the public IP address of router 26 (i.e., the address of the first network on the second network). Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claims 13 and 26.

The Office action also asserts that claim 14 recites “a query processor adapted to request information regarding the first network from the directory server,” but the Examiner was unable to find a description of the “information regarding the first network.” Applicants respectfully submit that the specification at least at page 13, lines 5-10, page 13, lines 15-17, page 13, lines 29-31, page 14, lines 28-33, page 15, lines 4-6, page 15, lines 17-19 adequately describes the cited claim language. In particular, the cited sections each describe a query processor requesting information regarding network devices coupled to the first network, and in this manner, are requesting information regarding the first network. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claim 16.

Reply to the § 102(b) Rejections

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 14, and have cancelled claims 9-10 and 22-23 without prejudice. Support for the replacement claims may be found in the application at least at page 8, lines 3-5, page 8, lines 23-24, and page 9, lines 14-21.

Amended independent claims 1 and 14 recite a network device coupled to a first network, wherein the network device includes: (1) information identifying the network device on the first network, wherein the network device is located inside a firewall; and (2) a registration processor/query processor adapted to provide the information to register the network device on a directory server/request information regarding the first network from a directory server, wherein the directory server is coupled to a third network and is located outside the firewall. None of the cited references describe or suggest the claimed invention.

In particular, Spinks describes a system 70 that includes nodes 74, a network infrastructure device 76, an admin computer 84 and network devices 90 coupled to a network 30 (§§0059-0061; FIG. 2). Nodes 74 are coupled via ports 80 to a network infrastructure device 76 that includes a connection table 100 that tracks by identification number which nodes are operably connected to each port 80. (§§0059, 0062). Individual nodes 74 may include a reporting module 88 that may transmit messages to obtain information contained in table 100. (§§0060, 0064). In particular, a reporting module 88 of a node 74 may determine and report to an admin module 86 hosted on admin computer 84 the end point connection information regarding the hosting node 74 and any other network devices 90 local to the node 74. (§§0064, 0068).

Unlike the claimed invention, Spinks does not describe or suggest anything about a network device that includes a registration processor/query processor, wherein the network device is coupled to a first network and is located inside a firewall, and wherein the registration processor/query processor is adapted to provide the information to register the network device on a directory server/request information regarding the first network from a directory server, wherein the directory server is coupled to a third network and is located outside the firewall. Instead, Spinks describes a system in which nodes 74, network devices 90, and admin computer 84 are all coupled to a single network 30, and none of the devices is located on opposite sides of a firewall.

The Office action asserts in connection with § 103(a) rejections of claims 9-10 and 22-23 that it would have been obvious from Hall to modify Spinks to place a directory server outside a firewall. Nothing in Hall describes or suggests anything about a network device that is coupled to a first network and is located inside a firewall, and that communicates registration information with a directory server that is coupled to a third network and is located outside the firewall. Instead, Hall merely describes a system that includes a web server located within a firewall to restrict access to the web server. (§0031).

The combination of Spinks and Hall would more likely describe a system in which nodes 74, network devices 90, and admin computer 84 are all coupled to a single network 30, and are all located within a firewall to restrict access to end point connection information for security purposes. In this regard, the references actually point away from the claimed invention.

Because the cited references do not describe or suggest the claimed invention, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 14 are allowable. Because claims 2-8 and 11-13 depend from claim 1, and claims 15-21, and claims 24-26 depend from claim 14, applicants further respectfully submit that claims 2-8, 11-13, 15-21 and 24-26 are also allowable.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, applicants submit that this application, including claims 1-8, 11-21 and 24-26, is allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner allow this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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